



Choice Training 8-1: Application Process Overview

1. 1. Application Process Overview

1.1 Training 8-1:



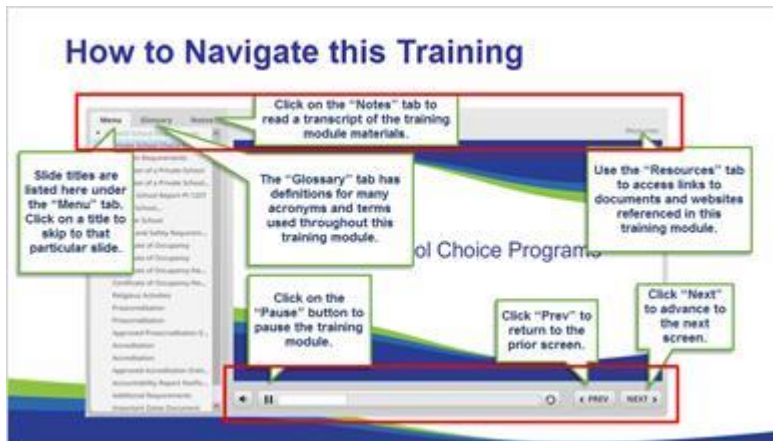
Notes:

Welcome to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's training module on the Private School Choice Programs. We will refer to the Private School Choice Programs as "Choice" or "Choice program" throughout this training. The Choice program is governed by Wis. Stat. §§ 119.23 and 118.60, as well as Wis. Admin. Codes ch. PI 35 and 48. Provisions of this training module are subject to statutory and rule changes.

This training module will provide an overview of the application process.



8-1.2 How to Navigate this Training Module



Notes:

Before we start, here are some tips and tools you may wish to use when viewing this training.

When listening to this training please note the buttons at the top of the training screen. Titles to all of the slides in this training are listed under the “Menu” tab on the top left of the training screen. You may watch the training in its entirety, or you may skip to a specific slide by clicking on the title of a particular slide.

Acronyms and terms that are used throughout this training are defined under the “Glossary” tab on the upper left side of the training screen. If you have any questions about a particular acronym or term that is used in this training, click on the “Glossary” tab to read the definition of that acronym or term.

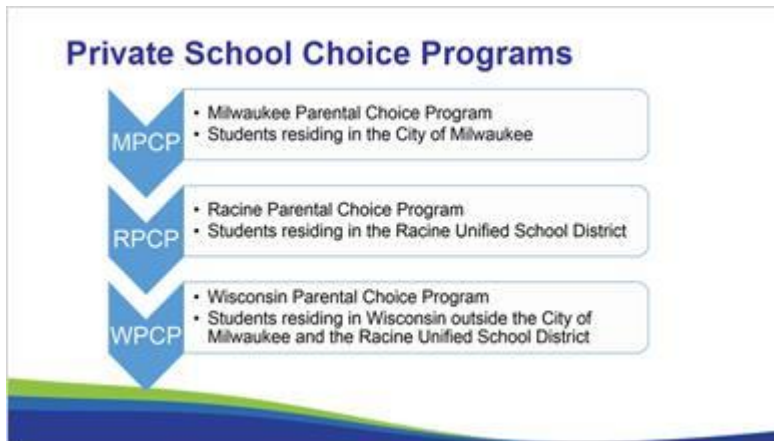
The “Notes” tab has a transcript of the training materials as they are presented. If you wish to read along with the training, please click the “Notes” tab on the upper left side of the training screen.

We have also posted resources related to this training which can be found under the “Resources” link on the upper right hand side of the training screen.

Next please note the buttons at the bottom of the training screen. If you want to pause on or during a specific slide, please hit the “Pause” button. Clicking the “Prev” button will allow you to return to the previous slide and clicking the “Next” button will allow you to advance to the next slide, if you wish to advance sooner than the auto-timing.



8-1.3 Private School Choice Programs



Notes:

There are three Private School Choice Programs in Wisconsin.

The program a student may apply to is based on where in Wisconsin a student resides.

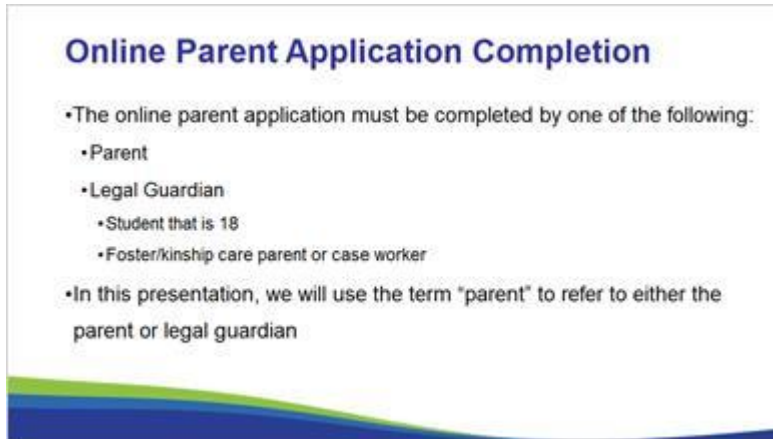
Students who reside in the City of Milwaukee, should apply to the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. The Milwaukee Parental Choice Program is abbreviated as MPCP.

Students who reside in the Racine Unified School District, should apply to the Racine Parental Choice Program. The Racine Parental Choice Program is abbreviated as RPCP.

Students who reside in Wisconsin, but do not reside in either the City of Milwaukee or the Racine Unified School District, should apply to the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program. The Wisconsin Parental Choice Program is abbreviated as WPCP.

The applicant will be required to provide documentation showing that he or she currently resides at the address on the application.

8-1.4 Online Parent Application Completion



Notes:

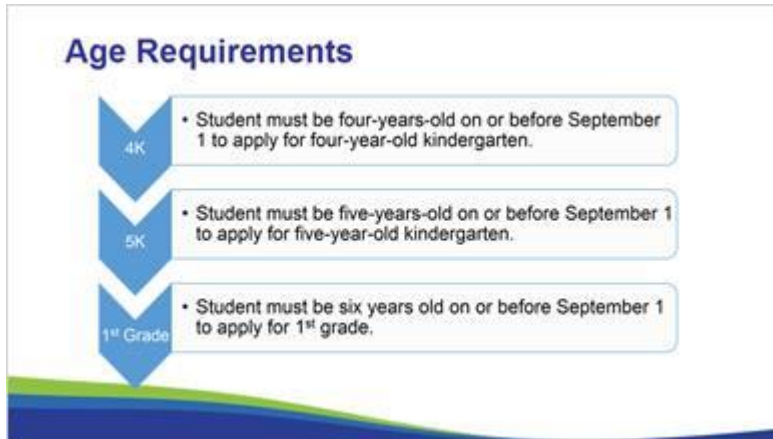
The online parent application must be completed by either the parent or the legal guardian of the student. The online parent application will include all parents and legal guardians who reside in the household with the student.

If the parents are separated or divorced, the parent who can complete the application for the student is based on who the student is placed with. The parent must have at least 50% placement of the student for the parent to apply for the student.

A legal guardian includes a student who is at least 18 as of the time he or she applies for the Choice program. In the case of a foster or kinship care student, the foster or kinship care parent or case worker is considered the legal guardian.

In this training, we will use the term “parent” to refer to either the parent or legal guardian. The parent must apply using the online parent application. If the parent needs assistance with completing the online parent application, they should contact one of the schools they are applying to. The school may help the parents but only the parent may submit the online parent application.

8-1.5 Age Requirements



Notes:

In addition to the residency requirements just mentioned, applicants must meet the age requirements for the Private School Choice Programs.

Students ages 4 through 20 on or before September 1 are eligible to apply for the program. A student who is 21 years old at the time of application or as of September 1, whichever is later, is not eligible for the program.

A student must be at least four-years-old on or before September 1 of the school year for which they are applying to be eligible for four-year-old kindergarten under the Choice program.

If a student is applying for five-year-old kindergarten, the student must be at least five on or before September 1.

Lastly, if a student is applying for first grade, the student must be six on or before September 1.

Please be aware there is no early admittance option for the Choice program that would allow a student to qualify for the Choice program if they do not meet these age requirements.



8-1.6 Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility Requirements		
	Residency	Income * (New students only)
MPCP	City of Milwaukee	300% of the Federal Poverty Level
RPCP	Racine Unified School District (RUSD)	300% of the Federal Poverty Level
WPCP	In Wisconsin, but not in the City of Milwaukee or RUSD.	185% of the Federal Poverty Level
		Prior School Year Attendance
		None
		*Applying for K, 1, or 9 grade; OR *In the prior school year; *Attended a public school in Wisconsin; *Was not enrolled in school; OR *Participated in the Racine or Wisconsin program
		*Applying for K, 1, or 9 grade; OR *In the prior school year; *Attended a public school in Wisconsin; *Was not enrolled in school; OR *Participated in the Racine or Wisconsin program

Notes:

In addition to the residency and age requirements, applicants may be required to meet income and prior year attendance requirements in order to be eligible to participate in the program.

A student that either participated in the same Choice Program in the previous semester or was on the waiting list in the same Choice program in the previous year is considered to be continuing in that program and does not have to meet the income requirements. Generally, all other applicants (referred to as “new students”) must meet the program income requirements. Please note, the income of married parents is reduced by \$7,000 when determining eligibility.

The income limits for each program are available on the Choice Student Applications webpage. A link to this webpage is available in the Resources in the top right corner of the training screen.

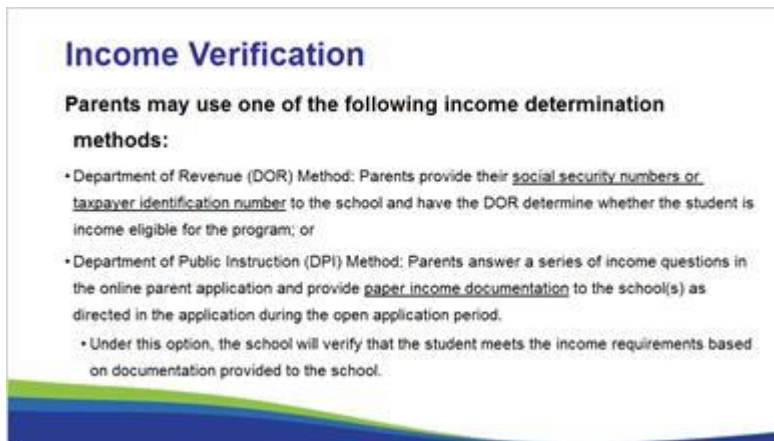
All students, new and continuing, applying to the Racine or Wisconsin parental choice program must meet **one** of the following prior year attendance requirements:

- The student is applying for four or five-year-old kindergarten, 1st grade or 9th grade;
- The student attended a public school in Wisconsin in the prior year;
- The student was not enrolled in school in the prior year (For example, the student was homeschooled or was three years old and not enrolled in school in the prior year.); **or**
- The student participated in either the Racine or Wisconsin program in the prior school

year.

For information on the general eligibility requirements for the Choice programs, please see the Frequently Asked Questions and Parent Brochure, which are available on the Choice Student Applications webpage. This information is available in English and Spanish. A link to this webpage is available in the Resources in the top right corner of the training screen.

8-1.7 Income Verification



Income Verification

Parents may use one of the following income determination methods:

- Department of Revenue (DOR) Method: Parents provide their social security numbers or taxpayer identification number to the school and have the DOR determine whether the student is income eligible for the program; or
- Department of Public Instruction (DPI) Method: Parents answer a series of income questions in the online parent application and provide paper income documentation to the school(s) as directed in the application during the open application period.
 - Under this option, the school will verify that the student meets the income requirements based on documentation provided to the school.

Notes:

Income eligibility for the program is verified one of two ways. The parent decides which option to use.

One option is to select the Department of Revenue income method in the online parent application and provide the parent(s) social security number(s) or taxpayer identification number(s) to the school. The Department of Revenue will determine if the student meets the family income limits.

Please note depending on when the application is submitted, the Department of Revenue may use tax information from the prior year or from two years prior. A document explaining the Department of Revenue income verification process is available on the Choice Student Applications webpage. A link to this webpage is available in the Resources in the top right corner of the training screen. Please review this document to



determine if using the Department of Revenue income verification method is the best income verification option for a family.

The second option is to answer a series of questions in the online parent application to determine the parents' prior year income. If this option is selected, documentation is required to verify the amounts entered into the application. Once the application is complete, an email will be sent to the email address used to log-in with the list of documents that must be provided to all the schools selected in the application. These documents could include tax forms and benefits statement from the prior year.

8-1.8 Open Application Periods

Open Application Periods		
Each school selects its open application periods from the following options:		
MPCP	RPCP	WPCP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feb 1-20 • Mar 1-20 • Apr 1-20 • May 1-20 • June 1-20 • July 1-20 • Aug 1-20 • Sept 1-14 • Oct 1-20 • Nov 1-20 • Dec 1 – Jan 8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feb 1-20 • Mar 1-20 • Apr 1-20 • May 1-20 • June 1-20 • July 1-20 • Aug 1-20 • Sept 1-14 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February 1 – April 20

If the last day of a MPCP or RPCP open application period falls on a weekend, the last day is the following Monday.

Notes:

Students may apply to a Private School Choice Program only during a participating private school's open application periods.

Each Private School Choice Program has different open application periods, which are listed in these tables. If the last day of a MPCP or RPCP open application period falls on a weekend, the last day is extended to the following Monday. For example, if February 20 is a Sunday, the February application period ends on February 21.

Schools participating in the MPCP or RPCP may choose all or some of the open application periods listed here.

Schools participating in the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program must accept applications during



the open application period listed under WPCP.

A parent must apply online and provide the required residency and income information, if applicable, during the same application period. For example, a parent that submits the online application for the MPCP on February 2 must provide the residency and income documentation, if applicable, to all schools that they applied to by February 20th.

Please note the online parent application is only available during these times. Between these periods, the parent will not be able to complete an online parent application.

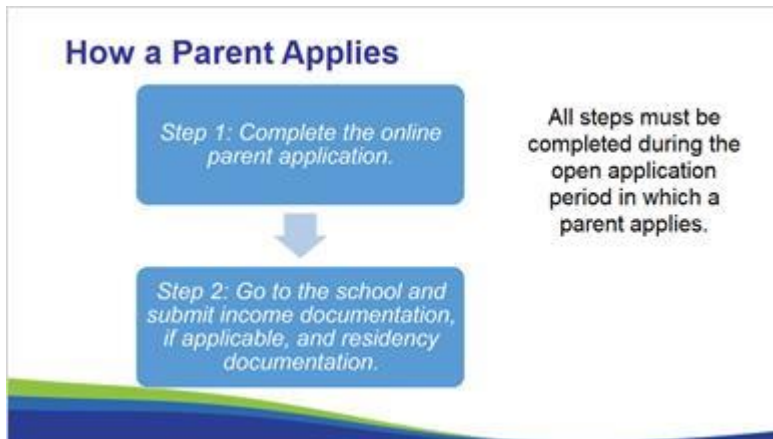
8-1.9 Participating Schools & Grades



Notes:

A list of the private schools registered for each program, the grades each school has available for Choice students, and each private school's open application periods are available in advance of the school year on the Choice Student Applications webpage. The list is generally available by February 1st. A link to this webpage is available in the Resources in the top right corner of the training screen.

8-1.10 How a Parent Applies



Notes:

During the open application period, the following steps must be completed.

First, the parent must complete the online parent application. Print screens of the online parent application are available on the Choice Student Applications webpage. A link to this webpage is available in the Resources in the top right corner of the training screen.

Second, the parent must go to all of the private schools selected in the online parent application and provide income documentation, if required, and the required residency documentation.

Late or incorrect documentation may result in an ineligible application, therefore it is important for the parent to provide the required documentation by the end of the open application period. Applicants to the WPCP must provide their documentation to all schools where they apply by April 20th. Applicants to the MPCP or RPCP must provide documentation by the end of the open application period that they apply. For example, if the parent applies during the February open application period, the supporting documentation must be provided to all of the schools where they applied by February 20th.

8-1.11 Information Required to Complete the Online Parent Application



Notes:

In order to complete the online parent application, a parent will need an email address that he or she regularly uses. Important information including confirmations and notifications will be sent to this email address.

The parent will need their income information, such as their tax forms, if one of their students are new to the program.

The parent will also need the names of the private schools they wish to apply to. A parent may apply to more than one school. If more than one school is selected in the application, the parent will need to bring residency and income documentation, if applicable, to each private school.



8-1.12 How to Log-In



Notes:

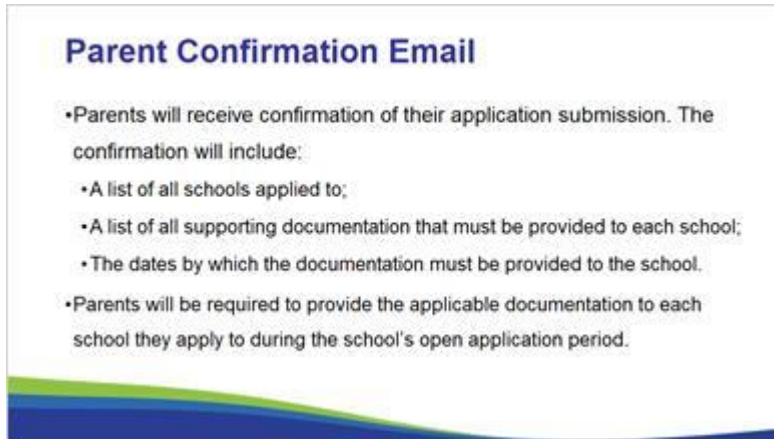
If a parent is new to the online parent application, the parent will need to register using their email address and create a password.

Parents that applied to any of the programs last year using the online parent application should sign-in as a returning user with their email address and password from last year. If the parent forgot their password, they can use the “Forgot your password?” link on the sign in page.

If the parent no longer has access to their email address but remembers their email address and password from last year, he or she can log in and change the email address for their account.

Returning users who do not remember the email address that they registered with or who no longer have access to their email account, may set up new login information. The online parent application will identify if the student is new or continuing in the program even if different log in information is used.

8-1.13 Parent Confirmation Email



Notes:

The confirmation email that is sent to the parent will list all schools where the parent applied, the documentation that must be provided to the school, and the dates by which the documentation must be provided to the school.

Before the end of the open application period, the parent must go to all private schools to which they applied and provide residency and income documentation, if applicable. A list of the allowed residency documentation is available on the Choice Student Applications webpage. A link to this webpage is available in the Resources in the top right corner of the training screen. The confirmation email will also include the list of permitted residency documents.

8-1.14 Random Selection

Random Selection

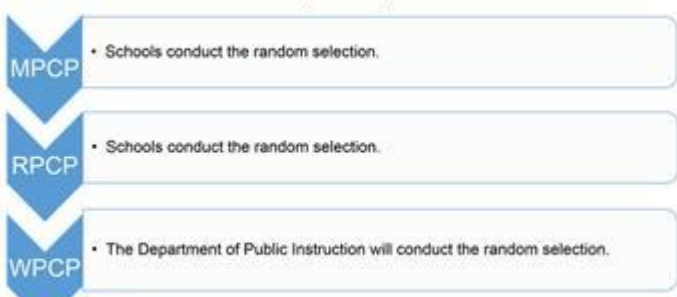
- If the number of eligible applications received during an open application period exceeds the number of seats available by grade or the number permitted by state law (WPCP only), a random drawing must be held to determine which applicants are accepted.
- Preference may be given for certain students including:
 - Students continuing in the Choice program and their siblings.
 - Students of siblings accepted into the Choice program.

Notes:

The number of seats available for Choice students may be limited by the school or by state law. If the number of applications received exceeds what is allowed, the school must hold a random drawing. During this drawing, preference may be given for students that are continuing in the Choice program and their siblings. Preference may also be given to the siblings of students accepted into the Choice program.

8-1.15 Random Selection (cont)

Random Selection (cont)



- MPCP** • Schools conduct the random selection.
- RPCP** • Schools conduct the random selection.
- WPCP** • The Department of Public Instruction will conduct the random selection.

Notes:

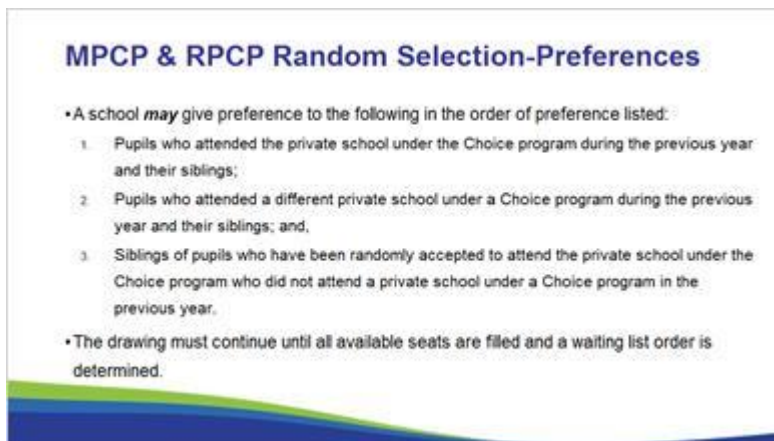
Students must be accepted on a random basis if more eligible students apply than spaces available at the school. Please note, schools may limit the number of seats available for Choice students.

Random Selection is conducted as follows:

Under the MPCP and RPCP, the individual schools conduct the random selection. The random selection must be open to the public so parents may attend.

For the WPCP, no more than a certain percentage of a public school district membership may participate under state law. In the 2017-18 school year, the department will complete the random selection for the program. In the 2018-19 school year and thereafter, the department will complete the random selection for any school district that has more eligible applications than the number of students that may participate in the program.

8-1.16 MPCP & RPCP Random Selection-Preferences



Notes:

Wisconsin statute permits schools to give preference to certain pupils. The students that may receive preference are listed on this screen in the order that they may receive preference. First preference can be given to pupils who attended the private school under the same Choice program during the previous school year. The siblings of those pupils receive second preference. Next, any



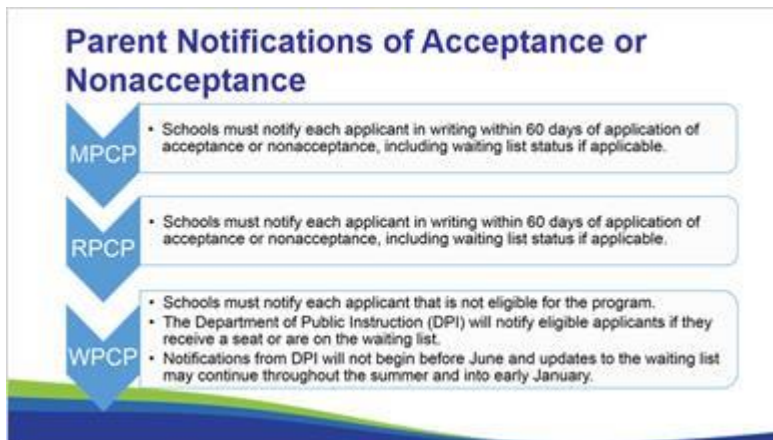
pupils who attended a different private school under a Choice program during the previous year receive preference, followed by their siblings. Finally, siblings of pupils who have been randomly accepted to attend the private school under the Choice program who did not attend a private school under a Choice program in the previous year may receive preference.

The random drawing must continue until all available seats are filled and a waiting list order is determined. In the MPCP and RPCP, schools may determine if a seat left vacant from a student withdrawal will be filled with a student from the waiting list. If the school decides to take students from the waiting list, the school must offer the seats in the order determined during the random drawing.

Schools that conduct their own random selection can choose whether or not they will apply these preferences. The school must determine which preferences it will use at the beginning of the year, if any, and apply them consistently throughout the year.

The DPI uses these preferences when completing the random selection for the WPCP.

8-1.17 Parent Notifications of Acceptance or Nonacceptance



Notes:

Notifications of acceptance or nonacceptance are provided as follows:

For the Milwaukee and Racine Parental Choice Programs the individual schools must notify each applicant in writing within 60 days of receiving the application whether or not they were accepted into the program. If an applicant is not accepted into the program, the

notification must include the reason why they were not accepted. Additionally, if an applicant is placed on a waiting list, the notification must include the student's place on the waiting list.

For the WPCP, schools will notify applicants that are not eligible for the program. The Department of Public Instruction will email eligible applicants. The notification will either indicate that the student received a voucher seat at one of the schools to which they applied or that they are on the program's waiting list. Notifications from DPI will not begin before June. If a seat becomes available at a later date, the department will notify the next eligible applicant on the waiting list via email that a seat is available. Seats may be filled until the 2nd Friday in January. After that date, no additional applicants will be taken off the waiting list.



Notes:

If you have any questions about the information discussed in this training, please see the Private School Choice Programs homepage. The left menu bar of the Private School Choice Programs homepage has resources for both schools and parents.

Choice schools may also contact the Choice team at privateschoolchoice@dpi.wi.gov, or call the toll-free number at 1-888-245-2732, extension 3.